

Speculative Society

Overview

An article on Glasgow's societies appeared in the February 1824 issue of *The Western Luminary*, a literary magazine published in the city. It briefly reports on the first meeting of this society:

'The Speculative Society of Glasgow, has, for its chief objects, the acquisition of knowledge, the advancement of truth, and the mental and moral exaltation of mankind'. At the first meeting, the first question for discussion was 'Have the writings of Lord Byron been more beneficial than prejudicial to Society?' [Note: the vote cast after the discussion was that he was more prejudicial than beneficial to society.]

('Glasgow Societies', *The Western Luminary, or Glasgow Literary & Scientific Gazette*, Vol. I, No. 3, 7 February 1824, p. 42)

A second article appeared a week later, and reports on the society's second meeting:

'The Society, we understand, consists of sixty members, each of whom has three tickets of admission. A large library is likely to be formed from their contributions' ('Glasgow Societies', *The Western Luminary, or Glasgow Literary & Scientific Gazette*, Vol. I, No. 7, 14 February 1824, p. 54).

Many literary societies expressed the wish to form libraries for their members' use. Societies would use part of the subscription money to buy books — often second-hand — and contributions of books were usually sought from society members and/or any generous donors from the community. It is currently unknown if this goal was achieved by the Speculative Society.

Date of Existence

4 February 1824-?

Source of Information

1. 'Glasgow Societies', *The Western Luminary, or Glasgow Literary & Scientific Gazette*, Vol. I, No. 3, 7 February 1824, p. 42;
2. 'Glasgow Societies', *The Western Luminary, or Glasgow Literary & Scientific*

Gazette, Vol. I, No. 7, 14 February 1824, p. 54

Repository

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Reference Number

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Additional Notes

The full title of this periodical is as follows: *The western luminary, or, Glasgow literary and scientific gazette, embracing, Reviews of all new and interesting publications — Discussions of all important matters connected with the West of Scotland — Biographical memoirs of such living and dead individuals as possess peculiar claims on our sympathy or regard — Original essays upon men and manners, institutions and principles — Poetry, written and selected for the work — Anecdotes and extracts — Arts and science — Truth and fiction, conducted by the Writers of the Free Press, and other literary gentlemen of Glasgow and the West of Scotland.*

From the [Mitchell Library online catalogue](#) on this magazine:

‘Notes: Additional information: 1 v (208p.); 28cm[,] Bound with: Select views of Glasgow and its environs / engraved by Joseph Swan ... Glasgow : Joseph Swan, 1828, in a volume with spine title *The western luminary*, Andrew Bain Memorial, Lacks nos. 14-16, no.18’ [accessed 31 January 2018].